

I am writing to you as one of thousands of people who visit Fort Trumbull in New London each year and enjoy this wonderful state park that the state spent millions of dollars to refurbish. I am a member of the Friends of Fort Trumbull State Park and one dozens of individual voters who volunteers to help support state parks; I feel compelled to comment on the proposed budget cuts to Connecticut State Parks. While the proposed budget approach appears to be a typical one of slash everything and see which voters complain, it certainly risks alienating a majority of citizens most of whom support and enjoy state parks. The proposed cuts to State Parks of over 15% are both outrageous and irresponsible and far exceed a number that experienced individuals believe is manageable with a good long term plan. State Parks have wide appeal to state citizens; they also draw out of state tourists who spend money and pay taxes in Connecticut. State Parks are a bellwether for how the state is doing; cutting State Parks sends the wrong message. Connecticut State Parks need more funding not less. At the same time that the executive branch is proposing cuts to the state park budget it is seeking opinions on a new state park which raises important but unresolved issues about what is the plan to support new and existing state parks. I urge the state general assembly NOT to pass a budget that cuts spending to State Parks without an approved long term plan that has a stated goals and long term vision of Connecticut State Parks. Thank you for giving your consideration to this important issue.

G. Clifford Carter, Friends of Fort Trumbull State Park

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